



# University of Pittsburgh

*Office of the Provost*  
*Graduate Studies*

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## **University Council on Graduate Study Minutes**

**Tuesday, October 23, 2018**

**3:00-5:00 p.m. 2017 Cathedral of Learning**

### **Members Attending**

Nathan Urban (Office of the Provost, Chair), Oliver Beale (GPSG – Medicine), Rachel Coombs (GPSG – President), Sandra Engberg (Nursing), Jennifer Enriquez (GPSG – VP of Committees), G. Kelley Fitzgerald (SHRS), Dennis Galletta (Katz), Mike Gunzenhauser (Education), Phillip Harding (GPSG – Bioengineering), Milos Hauskrecht (Substitute – Computing & Information), John Horn (Medicine), Satish Iyengar (A&S – Natural Sciences), Tara Meyer, (Arts and Sciences), Paul Nelson (Graduate School of Public and International Affairs), Kaitlin Powers (GPSG – GSPH), and Jennifer Walker (Office of the Provost, Staff)

### **Guests**

Ellen Ansell (Senate Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Discrimination Advocacy Committee), Mary Besterfield-Sacre (Engineering), Jay Hornack (Law), Alan Meisel (Law), Julia Spears (Office of the Provost – Pitt Commons), and Amy Wildermuth (Law)

### **Minutes**

The minutes from the September 2018 meeting were approved.

Dr. Urban discussed the AY 18-19 charge for each of the UCGS sub-committees and a sign-up sheet was passed around the room:

Graduate Student Affairs - Will focus on enhancing diversity and inclusion

Graduate Procedures – Suggest revisions to the Master's sections within Regulations Governing Graduate Study

### **GRE Scores in Graduate Admissions**

Dr. Ellen Ansell from the Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Discrimination Advocacy Committee (EIADAC) and Dr. John Horn, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the School of Medicine, discussed using the GRE scores in the admissions process. The EIADAC committee conducted a survey sent to a graduate program directors distribution list provided by the Office of the Provost and 82 responses were used in the data analysis. Survey results showed that GRE scores were not being used uniformly across the University in the admissions process.

Dr. Horn reported that graduate programs in the School of Medicine were given the option to drop the GRE requirement and all programs opted to do so. Dropping the GRE requirement is a national trend among programs in the Biomedical Sciences. The School of Medicine, Graduate Studies chose to follow this trend for 4 reasons: 1)

studies have shown evidence that GREs are a poor predictor of how a student will perform in graduate school, 2) pointless obstacle for diverse populations as research shows that GREs are a better predictor of race and gender than performance, 3) funding sources, such as the National Institutes of Health, no longer collect GRE data for training grant proposals, and 4) peers and aspirational peers have dropped this requirement making Pitt programs less competitive.

### **Proposal to establish an online certificate in Human Resource Law in the School of Law.**

The School of Law proposed to establish a new online 15-credit certificate in Human Resource Law. Pitt will be among the first law schools to offer this type of certificate and will cover human resource topics from recruitment through voluntary/involuntary termination.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the Provost that the proposal be approved. All members voted in favor of the motion.

### **Proposal to establish several BS/MS programs in the Swanson School of Engineering.**

The Swanson School of Engineering plans to create accelerated BS/MS programs in each of its six departments. This structure is very common in engineering schools across the nation, and Pitt is receiving an increasing amount of inquiries to offer such programs. In addition, the School is hopeful that the BS/MS will also serve as a feeder into Pitt Engineering PhD programs.

There were no academic changes to the MS degree requirements, and therefore a formal vote of UCGS was not necessary. Formal approval of these programs will be considered by Provost Cudd.

### **Graduate Certificates**

Based on Council's discussion at the September meeting, Dr. Urban presented updated modifications to the guidelines addressing graduate-level certificates. Council suggested the language be modified to say "at least 10 credits must be Pitt credits," which will allow for some credits to be transferred in from other institutions. The discussion of micro-credentials was tabled for a future meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the Provost that the graduate certificate guidelines be approved pending the one modification mentioned above.

### **Pitt Commons**

Julia Spears introduced Pitt Commons, a new web portal that allows students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends of the University of Pittsburgh to connect and to establish networking and/or mentoring relationships that are meaningful and specific to their unique interests and academic and career goals. More information can be found at <https://commons.pitt.edu/>.

**Announcements (given by Dr. Nathan Urban)**

2017-2018 AAU Data Exchange Graduate Student Stipend Rates - Of the 22 private and public AAU institutions who participating, Pitt ranked as follows: 10<sup>th</sup> for TAs and TFs, 12<sup>th</sup> for GSRs, 10<sup>th</sup> for GSAs, and 10<sup>th</sup> overall.

Graduate Student Unionization – Part 2 of the Pennsylvania Labor Review Board hearings has been scheduled for the October 30, 31, and November 1.

Graduate Commencement – Upon further discussion, it was decided that graduate commencement will remain on Thursday evening in 2019. This will be revisited for next year.

Tuition Incentive Program (TIP) – There will be a change in distribution of tuition disseminated back to schools. Student head count will no longer incentivize tuition distribution. Going forward, overall net tuition will be the main factor. This change will also simplify students who are enrolled in programs in two different schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00